specially in Jammu & Kashmir and North-Eastern Region;

(b) if so, the steps taken to minimise their operations;

(c) whether it is a fact that the base camps of these agencies are located across the border; and

(d) if so, the methods adopted to combat the menace?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR): (a) to (d) Government is aware of the involvement of Pak ISI in continuing its efforts to promote extremist activities in the country particularly in Jammu & Kashmir and North-Eastern Region. Government is also aware of the fact that base camps are located across the border.

Government is alive to the situation and is taking all necessary steps to combat and frustrate the designs of Pak ISI.

DOT tender to companies for Optical Fibre Cable

580. SHRI SANJAY DALMIA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Department of Telecommunication's tender to procure optical fibre cables was shelved and instead, certain companies were selected for the purpose; and

(b) the reason for scraping the tender in favour of the above companies?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VERMA): (a) and (b) A tender for procurement of Optical Fibre Cables, which was issued on 22nd March, 1996 as scheduled was opened on 21.5.96. The tender was issued for procurement of 21,000 KMs of Optical Fibre Cables. The Tender was subsequently cancelled because of formation of cartelisation among the bidders.

To meet immediate requirements orders were placed on two PSU's namely M/s Optel for 2800 KMs & on M/HCL for 1200 KMs.

Subsequently limited Tenders were invited from eligile bidders as below:—

(i) 1100 Kms of 6 Fibres, Tender opened on 23.10.96

(ii) 6075 Kms of Fiber, Tender opened on 17.10.96

(iii) 820 Kms of Fiber, Tender opened on 24.10.96

The tenders are presently under examination.

Approved rate for Faxing

581. SHRI JOY NADUKKARA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any rate of charges for faxing matters from the booths of the Department has been fixed;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is a fact that some of the booth operators are charging exorbitant rates; and

(d) if so, the action Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VERMA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) No Sir. In the booths run by the Department, only precribed rates are charged.

(d) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

Telephones Out of Order in Vikas Puri under Jank Puri Exchange

582. SHRI PARAG CHALIHA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of areas where telephones in Vikas Puri under Janak Puri exchange remained out of order for

hundred days and more continuously during 1996, due to the fault of M.T.N.L.;

(b) whether any responsibility has been fixed on the line and engineering staff for such mis-management, if so, the action taken other than providing rent relief to the subscribers; and

(c) in case no action has been taken against the erring staff and officers, the reasons therefor and how this malady is proposed to be curbed?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VERMA): (a) There is no such area in Vikash Puri where the telephones remained out of order for hundred days and more during 1996.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Pending Irrigation Projects for Maharashtra

583. PROF. RAM KAPSE: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state;

(a) whether Government have received any communication from the Government of Maharashtra in July, 1996 requesting for clearance of the irrigation projects in Maharashtra pending with them;

(b) if so, the details of such pending irrigation projects and the reasons therefor; and

(c) by when all the pending projects are likely to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA): (a) and (b) No specific communications from the Government of Maharashtra has been received in July, 1996 regarding clearance of the pending irrigation projects of Maharashtra. However, 14 major and 21 medium irrigation projects of Maharashtra are pending clearance. Their details are given in the statement enclosed. (*See* below)

(c) Though there is a time limit prescribed for techno-economic appraisal, clearance of projects depends upon how soon the State Government complies with the observations of Central appraising agencies and obtains environmental / forests / rehabilitation / resettlement clearances.

Statement

Status of appraisal of new major & medium irrigation projects of Maharashtra pending clearance at the Centre

Sl. No.	Name of the project	Estimated Cost (Rs. in crores)	Status of Appraisal
1	2	3	4
MAJOR			
1.	Dudhganga Irrigation	528.00	C
2.	Warna Irrigation	699.00	B
3.	Koyna Krishna Lift	709.00	B
4.	Wan irrigation	135.00	B
5.	Arunavati River Project	70.00	B
6.	Sangola Branch Canal	44.00	B
7.	Tillari Irrigation	323.04	B
8.	Bawanthadi Irrigation	261.00	B
9.	Punad Irrigation	62.00	B
10.	Lower Wunna Project	187.00	B
11.	Human River Project	162.15	D